United Nations A/C.5/53/33

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 November 1998

Original: English

Fifty-third session
Fifth Committee
Agenda items 113 and 44

Programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999

The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/53/L.22/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

Summary

The present statement is submitted in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedures of the General Assembly. Draft resolution A/53/L.22/Rev.1 would give rise to additional requirements under the regular budget of the United Nations.

As indicated in section III of this statement, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/53/L.22/Rev.1, an additional appropriation of $184,300 would be required under section 3, Peacekeeping operations and special missions, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999. An additional appropriation of $34,800 would also be required under section 32, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under Income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

98-33996 (E) 111198

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions, the General Assembly authorized provisions for additional staff for 1992 and 1993 pursuant to resolutions 46/109 A of 17 December 1991 and 47/118 of 18 December 1992, respectively. Reflecting the expanded support activities required under its resolutions 48/161 of 20 December 1993 and 49/137 of 19 December 1994, the Assembly authorized for 1995 the continuation of provision of additional staff to assist the Central American peace process. In view of the continued support activities required under its resolutions 50/132 of 20 December 1995 and 51/198 B of 27 March 1997, the Assembly authorized in 1996 and 1997 the continuation of those provisions for additional staff approved in 1995. In the implementation of Assembly resolution 52/176 of 18 December 1997, the Assembly authorized provisions for two staff (one at the P-4 level and one at the General Service level) for 1998. The current proposals reflect the continuation in 1999 of those resources authorized for 1998.

II. Draft resolution A/53/L.22/Rev.1

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 6 and 11 of draft resolution A/53/L.22/Rev.1, the General Assembly would:

(a) Request the Secretary-General, the bodies and programmes of the United Nations system and the international community to continue to support and verify in Guatemala the implementation of all the peace agreements signed under United Nations auspices, compliance with which was an essential condition for a firm and lasting peace in that country, and to provide their resolute support for the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) in the fulfilment of its mandate;

(b) Request the Secretary-General to continue to lend his full support to the initiatives and activities of the Central American Governments, particularly their efforts to consolidate peace and democracy through the implementation of a new, comprehensive sustainable development programme and the initiative to establish the Central American Union, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of that resolution.

B. Relationship of the requests to the approved programme of work

3. The above requests are related to subprogramme 1 Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, programme 1, Political affairs, of the medium-term plan the period 1998–2001 (A/51/6/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Corr.1)

C. Activities by which the request would be implemented

4. Should the General Assembly adopt the dr resolution, the Secretary-General would, with respect to requests outlined in paragraph 2 above:

(a) Continue to provide support for MINUGUA the fulfilment of its mandate, and to support the Histori Clarification Commission in the closing stages of its wo

(b) Continue the provision of good offices, required, as well as of substantive support and politi guidance to MINUGUA; and verification and good offi functions in the implementation of pending issues of peace agenda in El Salvador in full cooperation with United Nations resident coordinator for El Salvador, who also the representative of the United Nations Developm Programme in the area;

(c) Continue to lend full support to the initiati and activities of the Central American Governmer particularly in their efforts to consolidate peace democracy through the implementation of a n comprehensive sustainable development programme and initiative to establish the Central American Union.

D. Additional requirements at full cost

5. As evidenced in the report of the Secretary-Genera the situation in Central America (A/53/315) and other re documents related to this item (A/52/1008, A/53/288 A/53/421 and Corr.1), the United Nations continues to p an active role in the peace process in Central America Guatemala, MINUGUA is carrying out its multifac mandate (verification, good offices, advisory services public information) in support of the 1996 peace agreem and assisting the strengthening of key national instituti In El Salvador, the Organization remains committed tc consolidation of the peace-building process. While Secretary-General has entrusted the United Nations resi coordinator for El Salvador with the task of assisting

Government of El Salvador in the final implementation of pending issues, verification and good offices functions are still to be carried out from Headquarters. Similarly, the Organization continues to encourage and assist the Central American region as a whole in the steps taken to consolidate its progress towards peace, democracy and development through specific projects, including those aimed at judicial reform, the promotion of human rights and the eradication of poverty.

6. As mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report (A/53/531), Central American societies are currently undertaking steps to consolidate the deep transformations they have experienced in the past decade. At this critical stage, the Central American societies require the full involvement and support of the Central American nations and the international community if the resurgence of the root causes of conflict in the region is to be prevented.

7. It is anticipated that, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, adequate support for all the above aspects of the efforts of the Secretary-General in Central America should be provided. This would require the continuation in 1999 of provisions of related resources equivalent to one staff each at the P-4 level, for a Political Affairs Officer, and at the General Service level to assist in all aspects of the involvement of the Secretary-General in the Central American peace process; to follow developments in the region as a whole, particularly those related to the consolidation of democracies in the context of post-conflict peace-building, which imply the alleviation of poverty, promotion of social and economic progress, judicial reform and the safeguarding of human rights; and to coordinate activities with field offices of the United Nations system.

8. The Political Affairs Officer (P-4) would be assigned principally to follow the peace process and significant political developments in Guatemala and to provide backstopping and political guidance to MINUGUA's post-conflict peace-building activities. The Officer would also provide support to the Historical Clarification Commission of MINUGUA in the closing stages of its work on the human rights violations that occurred during Guatemala's internal conflict and would assist in the dissemination of its final report. The staff member would also brief and disseminate information to missions, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations currently interested in the Guatemalan peace process.

9. The estimated costs related to the salaries and common staff costs of the staff indicated in paragraph 7 above would amount to $184,300.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

10. No provisions have been made in the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999 related to the continuation in 1999 of the staff (one at the P-4 level and one at the General Service level) required to support the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General in the Central American peace process.

A. Contingency fund

11. As the activities related to the Central American peace process are of an extraordinary nature, they should be dealt with, as was done on previous occasions, outside the procedures related to the contingency fund, as provided for in paragraph 11 of annex I to General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986.

B. Action required by the General Assembly

12. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/53/L.22/Rev.1, an additional appropriation of $184,300 would be required under section 3 of the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999. An additional appropriation of $34,800 would also be required under section 32, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under Income section 1, Income from staff assessment.